

REMARKS

Claims 1, 15, and 30 have been amended. Claims 1, 4-5, 9-19, and 30 are currently pending in the application.

Claims 1, 4, 5, 10-19, and 30 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,351,323 (Onaka) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,945,531 A (Suzuki) and U.S. Patent No. 6,594,410 B2 (Kersey).

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 15, and 30 are patentable over the references, as none of the references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest, "said central wavelength of the transmission band of the optical multiplexer and multiplexer have central wavelengths shifted from the central wavelength of each wavelength channel of said WDM signal light toward shorter wavelength and longer wavelength, respectively. . .," as recited in claim 1, for example.

On page 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner acknowledged that Suzuki does not disclose a transmission band per wavelength channel as in the present invention. The Examiner, however, alleged that Kersey discloses a system related to the one disclosed in Onaka in view of Suzuki, in which the above-identified feature of the present invention is allegedly provided.

Applicants respectfully submit that Kersey simply discloses a product of filter functions. Although Kersey indicates that the resulting effective filter function derived by the product comprises a narrow wavelength band, Kersey does not disclose information pertaining to the length of a central wavelength as identified in the present invention. See Kersey, column 16, lines 17-24. Moreover, in further contrast to the present invention, Kersey fails to disclose shifting of a central wavelength of a transmission band, as recited in claim 1, for example. Kersey's product is related to the width of the wavelength band.

Therefore, independent claims 1, 15, and 30 are patentable over the cited combination of references, as Kersey fails to cure the deficiencies of Onaka and Suzuki. As dependent claims 4-5, 9-14, and 16-19 depend from independent claims 1 and 15, respectively, the dependent claims are patentable over the references for at least the reasons presented for the independent claims.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the

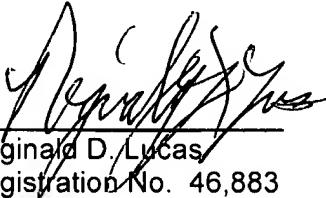
application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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